



**The savings so far...**  
Federal returns: \$1,088,519  
State returns: \$59,301  
Prep fee savings: \$64,021  
Returns filed: 629



**Yuma runner selected for Cross-Country championship**

... page 8



**Friday:** Sunny  
High: 79 Low: 48  
**Saturday:** Sunny  
High: 79 Low: 49  
**Sunday:** Sunny  
High: 79 Low: 47

Serving Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Arizona

# DESERT WARRIOR

Volume 8, Number 4

www.yuma.usmc.mil

Jan. 29, 2009

## Bombs away



Station explosive ordnance technicians walk away from the shell of an exploded van used to test the Marines' ability to rig and detonate a suspected car bomb during a training exercise Jan. 21 on the munitions treatment range within the Barry M. Goldwater Range.

Photo by Lance Cpl. Josue Aguirre

## Public service announcement made by Marines, for Marines

**Cpl. M. Daniel Sanchez**  
Desert Warrior Staff

Drugs. Marines have heard about them in briefs and discussions with their leaders. They have been warned of the dangers of substance abuse and its effects via computer presentations, lectures and videos featuring personal testimonies, but one man here is fighting the war on substance abuse with humor.

Virgil Tapispisan, station Drug Demand Reduction Program coordinator, has teamed up with more than 20 Marines and civilians here, including Col. Mark Werth, station commanding officer, and Sgt. Maj. Terry Stanford, station senior enlisted advisor, to create a public service announcement parodying "The Wizard of Oz."

Marines are hit with serious substance abuse

presentations all the time and many of them stop paying attention within the first 10 minutes, said Tapispisan. There is a lot of good information in the presentations, but for some Marines the presentations are not engaging enough.

By using humor and people they know in the commercial, Marines here will get the information they need to help them make responsible decisions while having a good time getting it, he said.

The idea for the commercial came to Tapispisan during last year's Aaron Tippin concert.

Some parents were upset at the images shown during an anti-meth public service announcement, saying they were too graphic for young children, said Tapispisan.

"So I decided to make my own commercial everyone could see," he said.

Although he knew he wanted to make a

see PSA page 4

## Yuma civilian awarded top honor

**Lance Cpl. Josue Aguirre**  
Desert Warrior Staff

The station anti-terrorism/force protection officer, Charles Richardson, will receive the Security and Law Enforcement Community of Interest Civilian Marine of the Year Award at the annual Security Conference Banquet, Feb. 25 for his service.

The award recognizes civilians who exercise original thinking, ingenuity, initiative and achieves significant results.

These results include process improvements, customer service and/or productivity in the area of security.

Richardson's selection is indicative of the tremendous contributions he made to the Marine Corps and the security community on a daily basis, said Raymond Geoffroy, assistant deputy commandant of Headquarters Marine Corps, Plans, Policies and Operations. His AT/FP program far exceeds the published requirements for his position, said Jan Durham, deputy director, Security Division, PP&O.

Richardson has developed and maintains a model AT/FP program—one that others model their programs after. This year the selection panel unanimously agreed that Mr. Richardson is a multi-talented individual who not only implements the AT/FP orders and directives, but finds creative ways to add to and enhance the program. In a word Mr. Richardson is a 'leader,'" said Durham. Richardson has planned and directed nearly every station



Charles Richardson

"Quite simply and in all dimensions, Mr. Richardson

see DRUG page 4

see AWARD page 4

## Corps sees decline in public's opinion of prestige

**Lance Cpl. Graham J. Benson**  
Desert Warrior Staff

A Gallup poll, conducted November through December 2008 examining the public and military perception of the armed forces, showed the Marine Corps is viewed as the most prestigious service branch. However, that number declined from 2007.

Although still well ahead of the other four branches in prestige, the Marine Corps suffered a 4 percent drop between 2007 and 2008, while the Air Force enjoyed a 5 percent increase.

A total of four poll questions were asked: "Which branch of

the military is most prestigious?"; "Which branch of the military is most important to national defense?"; "If you were turning 18 years old and had to spend two years in the service, which one would you prefer?" and "Suppose you had a child/grandchild who was considering his/her career options. How strongly would you recommend that they enter the military?"

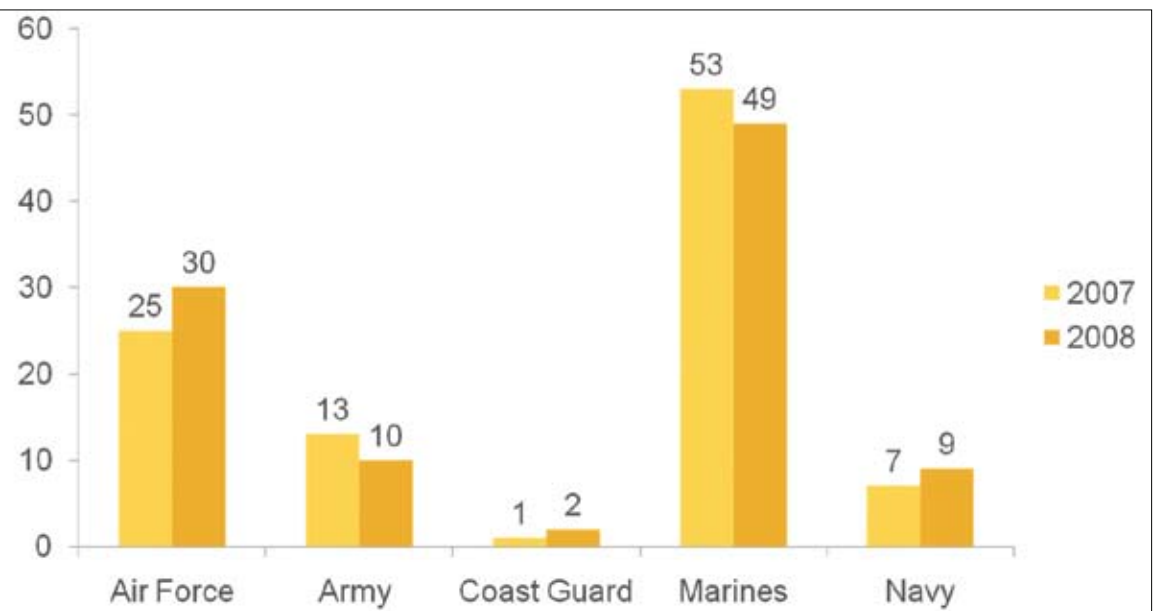
Each question's results were broken down into the responses from different demographics polled.

Male and female, veteran status, ethnicity, age and which branch of military the respondents were in, if they weren't civilians.

"As far as the public's per-

ception of the Marine Corps, I would say that it will always be strong," said Sgt. Maj. Courtney K. Curtis, Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron sergeant major. "Although, in my opinion, the negative media coverage of the war for sometime now has affected the average American's view of the Corps, but our history has shown that we go wherever the commander in chief tells us to go and we accomplish the mission with ethics."

The only demographic the Corps does not comfortably lead in the prestige category is among African-Americans polled; 38 percent



Courtesy of Gallup

From 2007 to 2008, the public perception of the Marine Corps' prestige dipped 4 percent, while the Air Force enjoyed a 5 percent increase.

see POLL page 4

# Super Bowl

Will the ‘Steel Curtain’ drop in the Cardinals’ flightpath or will Arizona soar to glory?

Lance Cpl. Gregory Aalto  
Desert Warrior Staff

Time and time again, coaches, players, sports-writers and fans from all levels and types of sports have said “defense wins championships.”

Their beliefs will be reaffirmed Sunday when the Pittsburgh Steelers take on the Arizona Cardinals at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, Fla., for Super Bowl XLIII.

Arizona has effectively used their playbooks to get this far in the playoffs. However, an over-performing offense and defense will falter Sunday, when the Cardinals have to face the NFL’s best pass defense and second best rush defense.

Defensive player of the year and Pro Bowl selectee, linebacker James Harrison, and Pro Bowl selectee James Farrior will give the inexperienced Arizona offensive line more to look at from the second tier than they have all season.

Another Pro Bowl selectee, strong safety Troy Polamalu, and his number two man, free safety Ryan Clark, will make Arizona’s deep wide re-

ceiver corps think twice every time they cross the middle of the field.

Pittsburgh will effectively shut down Arizona’s offensive line and running game without difficulty. Arizona’s leading rusher, Tim Hightower, averaged 2.8 yards-per carry in the regular season. But those numbers were boosted by big runs; the same big runs the Pittsburgh defense does not allow.

What you will see Sunday is something similar to what you saw second half of the NFC Championship when the Cardinals snuck by the Philadelphia Eagles.

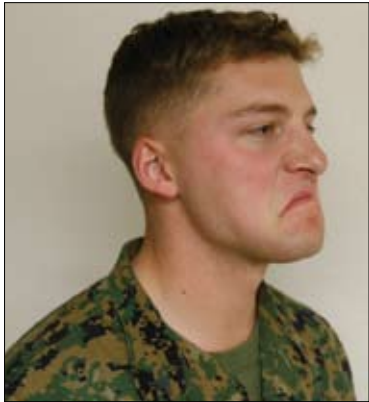
Cardinal running backs Tim Hightower and Edgerrin James with consistent 1-yard runs up the middle, followed by an incomplete pass and a punt.

And just like the Philadelphia defense did for the second half of the NFC Championship against the Cardinals, the Steelers will

do the entire Super Bowl.

Previous year’s statistics aren’t worth the paper they are printed on, but in this case, one statistic stands out. Teams scoring less than 20 points in the Super Bowl are 5-32. Soon that number will be 5-33.

Aalto’s prediction: Steelers 21, Cardinals 10



Lance Cpl. Gregory Aalto, Steelers proponent

Lance Cpl. Graham J. Benson  
Desert Warrior Staff

Who wins when dynamic offense collides head on with titanic defense? This is a question that has been debated since the beginning of sport itself.

Super Bowl XLIII will provide a showdown of the two, when the gun-slinging, free-flying offense of the Arizona Cardinals meets the blue-collar, stingy defense of the Pittsburgh Steelers.

The Cardinals receiving corps is arguably one of the greatest in playoff history and certainly in recent memory.

Arizona wide receiver Larry Fitzgerald Jr. has been unstoppable through his team’s unlikely postseason run.

Fitzgerald broke Jerry Rice’s single postseason receiving record of 409 yards in the NFC Championship game against the Philadelphia Eagles. He has 419 yards and will certainly add to that number on Sunday.

Fitzgerald is hardly the lone threat that the Steelers’ league-best pass defense will have to worry about. The Cardinals are the first team to ever bring



Lance Cpl. Graham Benson, Cardinals supporter

three 1,000-yard receivers to a Super Bowl.

Receivers Anquan Boldin with 89 catches for 1,038 yards in 12 games played during the regular season and Steve Breaston’s 77 catches for 1,006 yards, make it almost impossible and definitely dangerous to focus too much attention on Fitzgerald.

Leading this stellar group of playmakers is veteran quarterback Kurt Warner who is no stranger to high-flying offenses. Warner was the arm behind the “Greatest Show on Turf” St. Louis Rams, who won Super Bowl XXXIV in 1999. He was also awarded MVP honors for his performance in that game.

Against a blitz-happy Steelers defense Warner will shine. This season he’s completed 64 percent of his passes when blitzed for 1,645 yards and 14 touchdowns, making him the best in the league under pressure.

It is safe to say the Cardinals have made it this far without having a dependable rushing attack, I think

they will do it again Sunday.

With the veteran leadership of Warner behind center and the record-breaking play of Fitzgerald and the other Arizona receivers, the Cardinals have a chance to make history and resurrect a long down-trodden franchise into Super Bowl glory.

Benson’s prediction: Cardinals 24, Steelers 20

## Financial crisis snips GI Bill’s ‘Yellow Ribbon’ program

Tom Philpott  
Stars and Stripes

The worldwide financial crisis has hit private colleges hard enough that relatively few are likely to participate in the Post-9/11 GI Bill’s “Yellow Ribbon” initiative when it begins this fall, says Keith M. Wilson, director of education service for the Veterans Benefits Administration.

Under the Yellow Ribbon program, private colleges and universities can enter into agreements with the Department of Veterans Affairs to waive up to half of tuition and fees charged above the most costly state-run school. The VA, in turn, will match the waived amount, thereby enhancing school reimbursements and the value of the new GI Bill.

Wilson said he hopes he is wrong about near term prospects for the Yellow Ribbon feature which is intended to allow academically qualified veterans to attend some of the most prestigious schools in the country.

“Most schools aren’t going to want to

do a Yellow Ribbon program...because their finances have been hit too hard in the last couple of months,” Wilson said in phone interview on draft GI Bill regulations.

That, he added, is his personal opinion from informal talks with some private school officials and not official responses returned to VA.

Sen. John Warner, who retired this month, insisted last year that the Yellow Ribbon be part of the new GI Bill as a condition for winning his support. Warner said he wanted to be sure that qualified veterans could afford to attend the best schools just as veterans did following World War II.

VA officials in December 2008 mailed letters explaining the Yellow Ribbon program to private colleges and universities. VA is following up this month with another letter, this one asking schools if they will participate, what percentage of tuition and fees they might waive, and for how many veterans.

To date, Wilson said, he hasn’t detected much enthusiasm for offering Yellow Ribbon discounts.

“Schools are really struggling right now, especially the high-end schools,” he said.

“Their endowments have just been crucified. That’s [the] gut feeling I get from talking with these folks. They are just not in a position to be able to contribute.”

Wilson suggested that some costly private schools “may do something token” so as not to seem “anti-veteran.” But “not what we would have expected had we asked the question six months ago,” he said, before stock markets and student loan markets “went south.”

Many schools, he said, still are weighing the Yellow Ribbon option but there have been few positive signals.

“I really haven’t had a real strong, iron clad, by-God-we’re-going-to-do-this from any school,” Wilson said.

The new GI Bill will pay tuition and fees at any college, up to the cost of attending the most expensive state-run school. Students also will get a monthly living allowance, set to equal basic allowance for housing locally for pay grade E-5, plus up to \$1,000 a year for books and school supplies.

Veterans attending degree-granting schools where tuition exceeds the state-run school ceiling will have to pay the higher costs themselves unless the schools offer

further discounts through a Yellow Ribbon agreement.

Schools can waive whatever portion of the tuition disparity they choose, from 50 percent down the difference down to one percent. The government will raise GI Bill reimbursements by an equal amount.

The Department of Defense has responsibility for implementing the new GI Bill’s transferability feature, which allows some service members to transfer unused benefits to spouses or children. This month DoD has moved to relax the transfer feature’s eligibility requirement for service members who are retirement-eligible or near so.

The new GI Bill law allows transfer of benefits to a spouse or to children only if service members are on active duty or in the Selected Reserve (drill status) as of Aug. 1, and agrees to serve an additional four years. The member must have served at least six years already to elect to transfer benefits to a spouse. They must have served 10 years already transfer benefits to children.

The law is silent on whether transferability is barred if members can’t serve an additional four years because of DoD

or service policy such as high-year tenure rules for enlisted and up-or-out promotion demands for officers.

Fortunately, the law also gives Defense officials broad authority to reshape transferability requirement as needed. This month, after consulting with the services, Defense officials tentatively have decided to relax the four-year service rule when it bumps up against other policies.

The four-year service requirement would be removed for members eligible to retire now and those who become eligible on or before Aug. 1, the day the new GI Bill begins. (Retirement eligibility means completing at least 20 years of active service or 20 years of reserve service.)

Those eligible for retirement after Aug. 1, and before July 1, 2010, would have to serve only one additional year to qualify for GI Bill transferability. Those eligible for retirement after Aug. 1, 2010, and before July 1, 2011, would have to serve two additional years. Those eligible for retirement after Aug. 1, 2011 and before July 1, 2012, would have to serve three additional years to be able to transfer GI Bill benefits to family.

## Chapel Call

### “STOP BORROWING TIME”

Lt. Cmdr. Carl H. Farmer  
MAG-13 Chaplain

It’s time to stop putting off until tomorrow what you need to do today. I often hear people say, “When I get more time, I’m going to start that project that I’ve been putting off.”

Procrastination is a favorite pastime for many people and gets charged against many projects. Reading the scriptures is not

exempt from the list of things put off.

It’s time to stop putting it off, and devote time to reading the word of God.

Too many people make great promises and resolutions about studying the word of God. It is time to stop borrowing from tomorrow and do it today. I’ve heard some say, “I’ll do it, when I have more time.”

Don’t delay another minute; you’ll never have enough time to study God’s word, if it’s your intentions to study with the time left over from the day or when everything else is done. Are you ever going to get more than 24 hours in a day? Organize what you’ve been given.

The devil will make sure you run out of time. He will help you postpone reading the scriptures until a more convenient time, and place obstacles so that it’s always an inconvenience. The enemy wants to be sure you stumble through the year; tripping over and into the traps that are laid before you.

Walking in the world today is like traveling through a minefield. You don’t sweep a minefield by plugging your ears and stomping

your foot down in front of you to see if something goes off. You use the device that was invented for the job.

Living your life is the same way. Use the device that God has given to you. The word will help to detect the mines that are in front of you, so that you can triumphantly move through the mine field and get to the other side.

A few Scriptures from Proverbs is fitting for this occasion. “Pay attention and listen to the sayings of the wise. Apply your heart to what I teach, for it is pleasing when you keep them in your heart and have all of them ready on your lips, so that your trust may be in the Lord. I teach you today, even you (Proverbs 22:17-19).”

You might say, “How do I get started?” Start by making an appointment with your chaplain to discuss the road map to success.

You can’t plan a trip, if you don’t know where you’re going nor have the means to get there. If you need a Bible, stop by the chaplain’s office.

## DESERT WARRIOR

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# New rifle contracts awarded, in field by 2010

**Lance Cpl. Graham J. Benson**  
Desert Warrior Staff

Marine Corps Systems Command awarded four contracts to three companies to begin development of a new Infantry Automatic Rifle in December 2008.

By late 2010, the new rifle is scheduled to begin replacing the M-249 squad automatic weapon, which has been used by the Corps since 1985.

The Marine Corps awarded individual contracts to FN Herstal, the current producer of the M-249 SAW,

as well as Heckler and Koch Defense. Colt Defense was given two contracts because they have two different proposed systems.

The IAR will be a light-weight, magazine-fed, 5.56 mm weapon, much like the M-249.

Rate of fire and the weight of the new rifle are two important areas of focus for the companies, according to Marine Corps Systems Command.

At the squad level, “the biggest hindrance to being able to effectively fire and maneuver is the weight of the SAW,” said Patrick Cantwell, capability integration officer for the IAR program at MCSC.

Unlike the belt-fed SAW, plans call for the new IAR to pull its ammo from an attached magazine.

The companies’ proposed systems had a low-profile appearance, similar to the M-16, since the Corps wanted the IAR to be easier for Marines to maneuver with.

The competitive nature of the selection process is part of the government’s strategy to acquire the best possible product from the eventual manufacturer.

By March, the companies are slated to have 10 rifles of each design produced to give to the Corps for evaluation.

“In the new weapon I would defi-

nately like to see it lighter,” said Sgt. Richard Gulczynski. “Also, the M-249 can be very maintenance intensive for both the operator and the armorers, so the new weapon’s reliability will be something that I’m looking for.”

The new weapons will undergo operational testing by infantry Marines, keeping the individual Marine’s input at the forefront of their selection process. The weapons will also be tested for long-term reliability, said a MCSC press release.

With the change in weapons systems, affects to the facilities and personnel who store them is inevitable.

While at many of the larger installa-

tions, weapon storage space is usually not an issue, it can be much more difficult for smaller armories like Yuma, said Gulczynski, Marine Air Control Squadron 1 armorer.

“It’s like when we started replacing the M-16A2 rifle with the M-16A4,” said Gulczynski. “When the shapes of the weapon changes or even a few accessories are added to the weapon, the storage systems usually have to change with them.”

The station armorers will be watching for the new weapon’s release closely to see what the effect is going to be, said Gulczynski.

## New ASVAB prep class starting at education center

**Lance Cpl. Austin Hazard**  
Desert Warrior Staff

The station education center is scheduled to offer a new 10-day class beginning Feb. 18 for service members wanting to achieve a higher Armed Forces Classification Test score.

The course is designed for service members who need a higher score on the AFCT, formerly known as the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery, to change military occupational specialties or qualify for tuition assistance.

The course is scheduled to run from 8 a.m. to noon for 10 consecutive business days, said Kim Baars, station education services officer.

Each of the nine AFCT testing areas will be covered, such as arithmetic reasoning and word knowledge. Students will also begin and end each day with a practice test.

“The practice tests will really help with answering questions on the AFCT,” said Baars. “Taking all these different tests will help people understand and get used to the wording of the questions, which can be a big hurdle on the AFCT for some.”

On the final day of the course, service members have the choice to either take the actual AFCT or a practice test, said Baars.

Most Marine bases present the AFCT preparation course as a part of the 30-day Military Academic Skills Program. However, the air station offers it and the Test of Adult Basic Education, the other part of the MASP, separately, said Baars.

By splitting the two, service members are able to schedule the TABE program and AFCT preparation course around work, which affords flexibility and saves time for both the service member and the Marine Corps, said Baars.

“We haven’t had this preparation—the full MASP—here in Yuma for five years,” said Baars. “It’s really going to help prepare Marines for the actual AFCT.”

Education officers at Camp Pendleton, Calif., which has had the program, constantly sees positive results.

“About 75 percent, often more, increase their scores on the AFCT after the course,” said Pat Jeffress, Camp Pendleton education services officer. “I’ve seen several instances where scores have increased 30 points or more.”

The AFCT preparation course dates are rescheduled from Feb. 18 to March 3, April 29 to May 12, June 18 to July 1, Aug. 24 to Sept. 4 and Oct. 19-30.

Only 10 seats are available for each class on a first-come, first-served basis.

Service members will need a permission form signed by their command two days before the start of class and permissive temporary assigned duty orders by the first day of the class. Permission forms are available at the station education center.

## New ’09 LINKS programs hit Yuma

**Cpl. M. Daniel Sanchez**  
Desert Warrior Staff

The Marine Corps’ latest versions of the lifestyle-adjustment program, designed for Marines and their children, will kick off here in February and March.

The three programs, called Lifestyle, Insights, Networking, Knowledge and Skills for Marines, kids and teens, takes the various subjects covered in the original program and tweaks them to fit new audiences.

Subjects covered include the Marine Corps, benefits and services, understanding a leave and earnings statement, communication skills, staying in the Corps, moving, separation and deployment, as well as investing in the local community.

It’s great to see how L.I.N.K.S. has been formatted to encompass more of the Marine family, said Shannon Lacovara, Marine Corps Family Team Building director who oversees

the L.I.N.K.S. program here.

The mentoring program focuses on helping Marines and their children, ages 6-18, adapt to the unique challenges of military life, said Jessica Buscha, Yuma L.I.N.K.S. trainer.

“For example, the children’s program focuses a little bit more on the ‘touchy-feely’ side of things,” added Buscha. “We go more into trying to explain what is going on in their lives and making it something they can talk about. We try to bring issues down to how they view them.”

“Having a format where kids come in and talk to other kids who are going through the same things they are is going to make this program great,” said Lacovara.

L.I.N.K.S. for Kids also has more interaction, aimed at keeping the participants interested, said Buscha.

Teen L.I.N.K.S. revolves more around communication and how to deal with issues brought on by military life, like deployment, said Buscha.

“We talk about the benefits of journaling

as a coping mechanism and encourage them to talk to their parents if they have problems,” she said.

L.I.N.K.S. for Marines has also been modified by getting rid of the Marine Corps history and tradition section, since Marines receive this training in boot camp, as well as placing Marines as instructors in place of spouses, said Buscha.

Although the programs will not officially kick off until next month, members of the MCFTB team are predicting L.I.N.K.S. for Kids will be one of the most successful variations.

“The goal of the programs is to give Marines and their children the tools they need to succeed,” said Buscha.

The next L.I.N.K.S. for Marines session is scheduled for Feb. 20, while those for children and teens are scheduled for March 14 and 21, respectively.

To sign up for a session, contact Buscha at 928-269-6503.

### Tired yet?



Photo by Cpl. M. Daniel Sanchez

**Lance Cpl. Andrew Renz, Marine Wing Support Squadron 371 fuels division Team 1 member, cheers on his fellow teammate Cpl. Blasha Thor, middle, to win the tire flip relay against Team 2's Lance Cpl. Christopher Brom. The MWSS-371 fuels division held its first training/field meet, using actual combat missions, Friday at the Cannon Air Defense Complex to cross-train and test the skills of the bulk fuel specialists and fuel vehicle drivers within the unit. Brom's team emerged from the event victorious.**

## Military service secretaries stay on, ensure smooth transition

**Army Staff Sgt. Michael J. Carden**  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Each U.S. military service secretary has agreed to Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates’ request to stay in office for at least several weeks to help ensure the Defense Department’s smooth transition under the Obama administration, Pentagon officials said recently.

“They have been asked and have agreed to serve for some time as the new administration works on identifying individuals to fill those positions,” Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman said Jan. 22.

Navy Capt. Beci Brenton, a spokeswoman for Navy Secretary Donald C. Winter, said “he has agreed to stay until March 13 or until he is relieved prior to that date.”

Winter became the 74th Navy secretary in January 2006. Before swearing into office, he was a corporate vice president and president of Northrop Grumman’s mission systems sector.

Army Secretary Pete Geren and Air Force Secretary Michael B. Donley have not announced a timeline for their stay, but Army and Air Force officials today confirmed both secretaries’ willingness to continue serving in their positions until their successors are named and confirmed by the Senate.

“I look forward to continuing to work with Secretary Gates in service to our soldiers and their families, and working with the transition team

to ensure an orderly transition to the new administration,” Geren said in a recent statement, adding that his work with the men and women of the U.S. Army is “truly the privilege of a lifetime.”

Geren became the acting Army secretary in March 2007 and was confirmed by the Senate as the Army’s 20th secretary the following July. Geren also has held the Army’s No. 2 civilian leader position, serving as its undersecretary from February 2006 until he assumed top responsibilities. Before that, he served six months as the acting Air Force secretary.

Donley was sworn into office in October 2008. Prior to becoming the 22nd Air Force secretary, he served as the Defense Department’s director of administration and management. He was responsible for the department’s organizational and management planning.

## Defense officials address Guantanamo Bay detainee concerns

**Gerry J. Gilmore**  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — As the Defense Department prepares plans to close the U.S. detention center at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, defense officials acknowledge the possibility that released detainees could return to the battlefield.

“It’s something that we’re cognizant of. It’s obviously something that we try to assess at the time of transfer when we are looking at these individuals,”

Pentagon spokesman Bryan Whitman told Pentagon reporters Friday.

President Barack Obama yesterday signed an executive order that directs the closure of the U.S. detention center at Guantanamo within a year.

The detention center has housed nearly 800 suspected terrorists captured in Afghanistan, Iraq and other places since the start of the Global War on Terrorism that followed the Sept. 11, terrorist attacks on the United States. Approximately 250 detainees are being held at Guantanamo, including Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, the alleged mastermind of the 9/11 attacks.

Of the more than 500 detainees who have been transferred from Defense Department custody, 18 allegedly have resumed terrorist activities and another 43 former detainees are suspected of having resumed their former lives, Whitman said.

Whitman addressed a query from a reporter citing news reports that a former Guantanamo detainee had apparently become an associate leader for al-Qaida in Yemen.

Guantanamo inmates’ cases are reviewed annually, Whitman said, to ascertain whether or not they qualify for release. However, he said, there’s no guarantee

released individuals won’t return to terrorism.

“You can’t have absolute certainty,” Whitman acknowledged.

Speaking to Pentagon reporters, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates yesterday acknowledged there are challenges inherent with shuttering the center.

“Clearly, the challenge that faces us, and that I’ve acknowledged before, is figuring out how do we close Guantanamo and at the same time safeguard the security of the American people,” he said.

There “are answers to those questions,” Gates said, noting there is “a lot of work to do.”

DRUG ... from page 1

Point Loma, Calif., for a monthlong rehabilitation program.

“In general, the treatment is very effective because very rarely do they pop positive a second time,” said Tapispisan.

The issue with drugs is a very specific, small problem, said Bender. A year with no positives might not be realistic.

While drug use is down, alcohol abuse is still on the rise.

Although no stats are available, the severity and quantity of the alcohol-related incidents has increased since 2005, said Bender.

The amount of DUIs with more than .25 blood alcohol content and the amount of depression and addiction issues are more than they were four years ago.

Stress and boredom are two of the common factors Marines drink, said Bender, who surveyed Marines last year to help adjust SACC’s attack on Marines’ problem drinking.

In response to the rising alcohol issue, Bender recently hired two employees to assist in fighting the problem.

“My goal is to drop base DUIs by 50 percent this year,” said Bender.

PSA ... from page 1

station-focused commercial, it wasn’t until a few days later Tapispisan knew what direction the commercial would take.

“I was driving to El Centro thinking ‘what kind of movie should I use?’” said Tapispisan. “I started listening to ‘Some-where Over the Rainbow,’ and the rest took off from there.”

After choosing the movie and writing a script, Tapispisan set out to recruit some local actors.

“At first I was going to hold auditions, but when people heard about it, they started calling me,” he said.

Even Yuma’s Single Marine Program coordinator jumped at the chance to star in the commercial.

“I was talking with Virgil

about other projects at the time and he asked me if I could do it. I thought it would be a great opportunity,” said Tanya Lewis, Single Marine Program special events coordinator.

Although Yuma’s DDRPhasn’t approached substance prevention with humor before, Tapispisan and Marines who are starring in the film think it will do well.

“I think it’s going to do well because it’s humorous and educational,” said Staff Sgt. Edwin Jose, Marine Attack Fighter Squadron 401 supply chief, who is playing a role in the commercial.

“I think humor is a good approach because a lot of people like to laugh,” added Sgt. Erin Andersen, Marine Aircraft Group

13 administration chief, who is also starring in the commercial.

The Marines are still going to get information about substance abuse prevention and responsible decision making, just in a fun way, said Tapispisan.

While most of the plot is still under wraps and production started Jan. 21, Tapispisan’s goal is to debut the commercial in June during the 2nd Annual West Coast Senior Leadership Summit put on by DDRP.

“I want to show it then because there are going to be representatives from Headquarters Marine Corps there, and I want them to see it. I think this will increase the chances of it getting seen, since so many leaders are going to be there,” said Tapispisan.

POLL ... from page 1

see the Corps as most prestigious compared to 35 percent for the Air Force.

Gallup found the Army overwhelmingly is seen among Americans as the most important to national defense. The Air Force came in second in all demographics except among African-Americans, Hispanics and adults ages 18-44, where the Corps came in second.

“I agree with the poll in terms of the Air Force, but not the Army,” said Curtis. “The Air Force has so much to bring to the table in terms of far-reaching capabilities. Their aerospace platform and information technology abilities definitely make them a great asset to our country’s defense. The Army however, is a sustainment force, more geared for the long-term occupation of an area, so I don’t think that it would qualify as more important than the Air Force or even the Navy.”

The Air Force was chosen unanimously among all demographics in the “Which service would you prefer?” question.

The Navy came in second, with the others almost tied across the board.

“I think we do very well in that category because of the diversity of jobs we offer in the technical fields and also Air Force community college options we have,” said Staff Sgt. Starla Ferrari, an Air Force recruiter in Phoenix.

“The Air Force has worked hard to project a very professional image for some time now, and I think that is reflected in the public’s opinion of us.”

More than a third of those polled said that they would not recommend the military for their child or grandchild. This percentage raised significantly among women, African-Americans, non-veterans, Hispanics, people younger than 29 years old and those who have children between 12 and 24 years old.

Among all demographics, Americans would recommend the Air Force over the other services.

“The Air Force has always attracted a very intelligent and technically-minded individual, and I don’t think that’s going to change,” said Curtis. “But I think that we will continue to be known as those who fight for God, country and Corps.”

The poll measured responses from 45,000 adults and were reflective of U.S. Census estimates.

AWARD ... from page 1

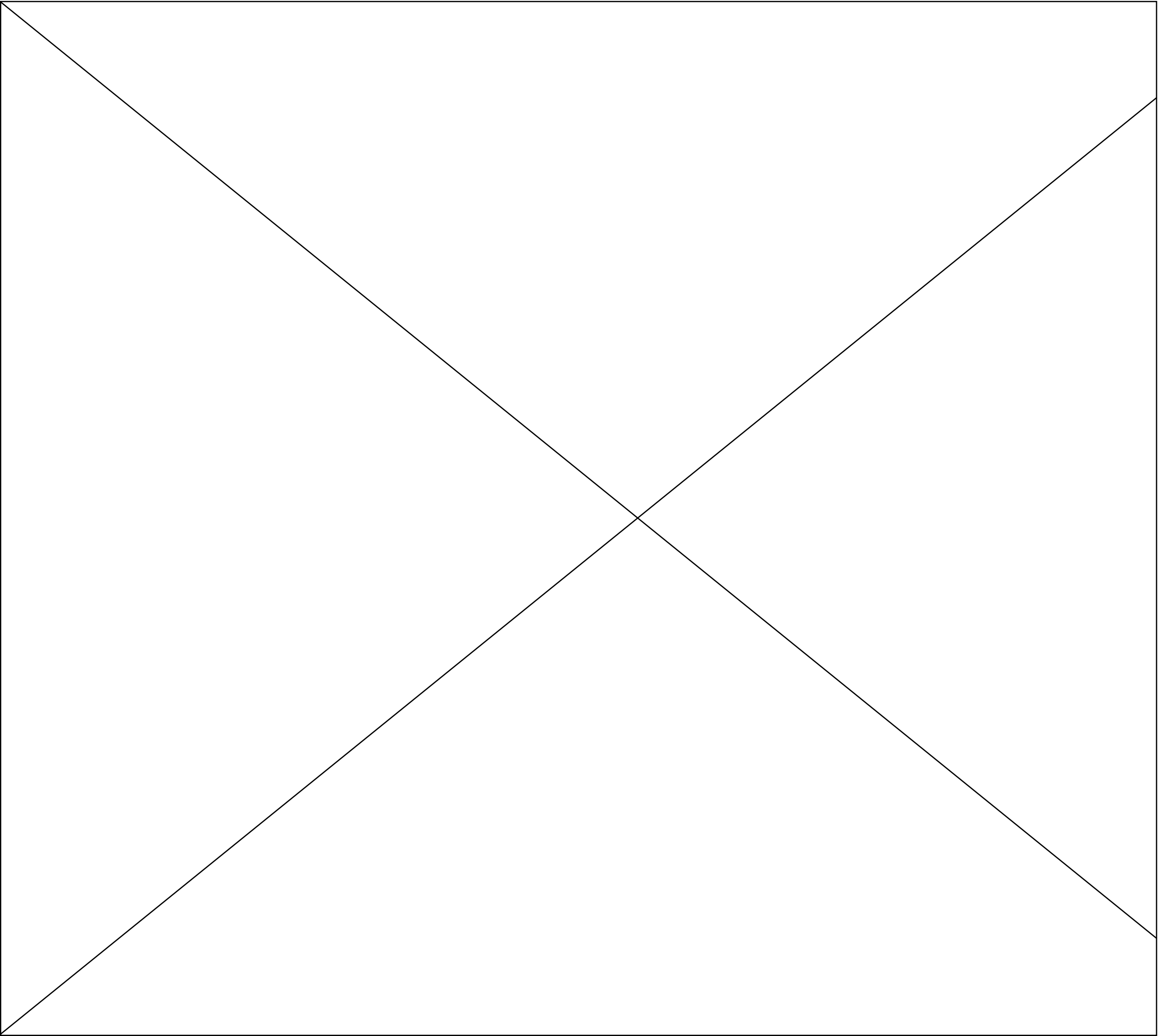
anti-terrorism training exercise for the past four years and credits his award to the people he works with.

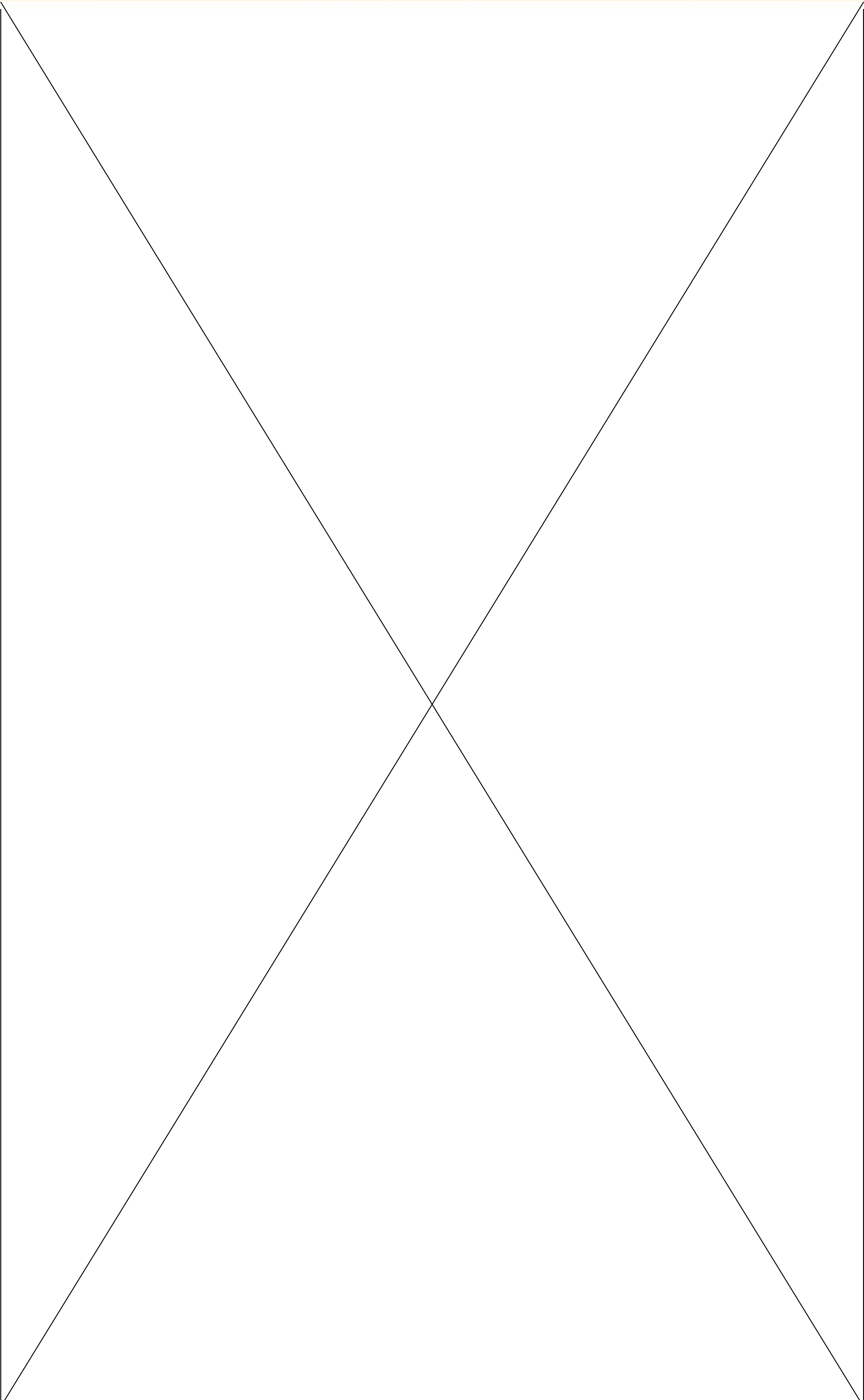
“I think it’s a compliment to this department. It’s an individual award, but I didn’t get it on my own,” said Richardson. “It’s a good working environment here.”

A lot of people do things for recognition, but Richardson is not one of them, said Earl Hamilton, emergency manager and Richardson’s co-worker. He does the right thing because it’s the right thing to do, even when no one is watching.

“He is very humble when it comes to taking credit for anything,” said Hamilton.

Richardson retired after 30 years in the Army at the rank of command sergeant major.





AT EASE

Public Notice

The Department of the Navy will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the basing of the Marine Corps F-35B Joint Strike Fighter on the West Coast. The EIS will address the potential environmental consequences that may result from the basing and operating F-35B aircraft at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar, California and MCAS Yuma, Arizona. The F-35B would replace the aging AV-8B and F/A-18 A/C/D aircraft currently based at these air stations. The proposed action would involve basing up to 182 F-35B aircraft in 10 active-duty squadrons, a reserve squadron, and an Operational Testing and Evaluation squadron at MCAS Miramar and MCAS Yuma. The EIS will evaluate a total of five action alternatives representing a range of split-basing options, as well as the No-Action alternative.

The Department of the Navy will be holding public scoping meetings that will help identify environmental issues and community concerns with respect to this proposed action. Meetings will follow an open house format with Department of the Navy representatives available at different informational displays to describe the proposal, EIS approach, and National Environmental Policy Act process. There will be no formal presentations; but opportunities to comment will be available at the meetings. Please plan to attend **at your convenience anytime between 5:00 pm and 9:00 pm**. The open house meeting will be held at the following locations:

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Tuesday, February 3, 2009   | Miramar, Mira Mesa Branch Library<br>8405 New Salem St., San Diego, California |
| Wednesday, February 4, 2009 | Gila Ridge High School<br>7151 E 24th St., Yuma, Arizona                       |

If you are unable to attend the meetings, please visit our website for information regarding the proposal at: [www.usmcJSFwest.com](http://www.usmcJSFwest.com). Please submit all comments by February 17, 2009 to ensure their consideration in the EIS analysis. Please submit your comments at the scoping meetings, on the website, or by mail to:

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest  
1220 Pacific Highway  
San Diego, California 92132-5190  
Attn: JSF West EIS Project Manager

Free tax preparation at the tax center



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Call 928-269-3277  
for more information or  
appointments

News to Use

W-2s now available online

Electronic W-2 forms for 2008 are now available on myPay at <https://mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>. For questions concerning myPay, call 1-888-332-7411. If information posted to your W-2 is incorrect, please contact your servicing pay office or your customer service representative for assistance.

Official military personnel files now available online

All active duty and reserve personnel with a Bureau of Naval Personnel online account can now view their OMPF through the Web-enabled record review option on the account's main menu page. WERR reduces the time it takes to view an OMPF. Before, a CD had to be requested, taking days or weeks to receive. This provides an electronic service record available to view and validate. Users can also download and print service record documents for personal or professional needs. The Web site to access a BUPERS online account is <https://www.bol.navy.mil>. Sailors will need to use their Common Access Card with the appropriate certificates and a CAC-enabled computer. Documents that have been sent to Navy personnel command within the past few months may still be in the process of being scanned to the permanent record. For additional information, reference Naval Administration Message 011/09.

In Theaters

**Thursday**  
Cadillac Records (R)  
7 p.m.

**Friday**  
Seven Pounds (PG-13)  
6 p.m.

Yes Man (PG-13)  
9 p.m.

**Saturday**  
The Tale of Despereaux (G)  
4 p.m.

The Day the Earth Stood Still (PG-13)  
7 p.m.

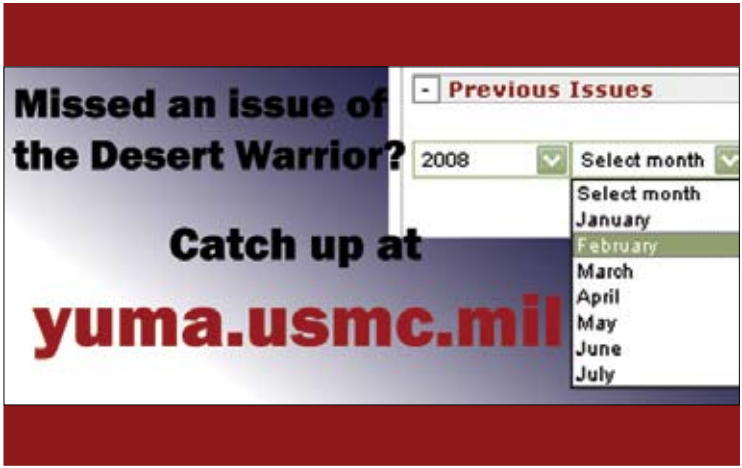
**Sunday**  
Nothing Like the Holidays (PG-13)  
5 p.m.

**Monday**  
Cadillac Records (R)  
5 p.m.

**Tuesday**  
The Day the Earth Stood Still (PG-13)  
7 p.m.

**Wednesday**  
**\*Free admission\***  
The Tale of Despereaux (G)  
7 p.m.

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE  
Call 928-269-2358 or visit  
<http://www.yuma.usmc-mccs.org/theater.htm>



MESS HALL MENU

HOURS OF OPERATION

**Weekdays**  
Breakfast: 5:30 - 7:30 a.m.  
Lunch: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Dinner: 4 - 6 p.m.

**Saturday & Sunday**  
Breakfast/Brunch: 9 a.m. to noon  
Dinner: 3 - 5 p.m.

**Prices**  
For military without meal cards  
Breakfast: \$2.30  
Lunch and dinner: \$4.25



THURSDAY

**LUNCH:** Chicken Noodle Soup  
Roast Beef  
Turkey w/ Primavera  
Mashed Potatoes  
Lyonnaise Carrots  
Succotash  
**DINNER:** BBQ Spareribs  
Beef Stew  
Buttered Egg Noodles  
Confetti Rice  
Southern-style Greens  
Peas & Mushrooms

FRIDAY

**LUNCH:** Clam Chowder  
Beef Yakisoba  
Southern-fried Catfish  
Baked Macaroni & Cheese  
Simmered Corn  
Brussels Sprouts  
**DINNER:** Swedish Meatballs  
Savory Rotisserie Chicken  
Buttered Egg Noodles  
Cauliflower Combo  
Black-eyed Peas  
Dinner Rolls

SATURDAY

**BRUNCH:** Eggs  
Navy Bean Soup  
Cold Cereals  
Sausage Patties  
Oven-fried Bacon  
... and more  
**DINNER:** Navy Bean Soup  
Swiss Steak  
Mexican Turkey Pasta  
Roasted Pepper Potatoes  
French-fried Cauliflower  
Green Beans

SUNDAY

**BRUNCH:** Eggs  
Grilled Ham Slices  
Oven-fried Bacon  
Pancakes / Waffles  
Chicken Sandwich  
... and more  
**DINNER:** Bean Veggie Chili  
Roast Beef  
Baked Salmon Filet  
Mashed Potatoes  
Cilantro Rice  
Simmered Carrots

MONDAY

**LUNCH:** Chicken w/ Rice Soup  
Salisbury Steak  
Chicken & Vegetable Pasta  
Mashed Potatoes  
Herbed Green Beans  
Summer Squash  
**DINNER:** Turkey Pot Pie  
Dijon Pork Chop  
Roast Potato Wedges  
Steamed Rice  
Club Spinach  
Mixed Vegetables

TUESDAY

**LUNCH:** Tomato Soup  
Roast Beef  
Shrimp, Sausage & Penne  
Garlic Cheese Potatoes  
Broccoli  
Succotash  
**DINNER:** Chili Macaroni  
Savory Baked Chicken  
Grilled Cheese Sandwich  
Lyonnaise Potatoes  
Simmered Peas  
Carrots

WEDNESDAY

**LUNCH:** Corn Chowder  
Santa Fe Glazed Chicken  
BBQ Spareribs  
Long Grain & Wild Rice  
Candied Sweet Potatoes  
Corn O'Brien  
**DINNER:** Pepper Steak  
Cheese Tortellini w/ Marinara  
Steamed Rice  
Italian Vegetable Blend  
Calico Cabbage  
Cheese Drop Biscuits

**Events**  
[www.mccsyuma.org](http://www.mccsyuma.org)

**THE GAME OF THE YEAR**

**CARDINALS**  
ARIZONA

**VS**

**STEELERS**  
PITTSBURGH

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2009 | 12 NOON | ALL HANDS**

**INFINITIES**

**Pub menu available.**

Raffle during half-time and HUGE raffle after the game!

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ADS

# SPORTS

## Yuma Marine selected for Armed Forces Cross-Country championship

**Lance Cpl. Austin Hazard**  
Desert Warrior Staff

A Yuma Marine recently qualified to compete at the Armed Forces Cross-Country Championship in Derwood, Md., Feb. 7.

2nd Lt. Erin Demchko, Marine Wing Support Squadron 371 maintenance management officer, was the first female to cross the finish line at the All-Marine Cross-Country Championship at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif., Jan. 12.

Demchko's performance landed her one of the five spots for Marine females in the Armed Forces Cross-Country Championship.

With a finishing time of 33 minutes, 46 seconds, Demchko completed the 8-kilometer track 2 seconds before her closest female competition and more than 37 seconds ahead of 19 other female runners.

Only 10 All-Marine runners are se-

lected for the Armed Forces Championship, five males and five females.

"I love being on that team," said Demchko, who has been running with the All-Marine team for a year. "The people that run for it and the coach that we have are phenomenal people that love to run. Whenever you're doing something you love with other people who love it as well, that's the best situation you can be in."

Demchko has been running competitively for approximately 11 years, including four years with the U.S. Naval Academy cross-country team, which she was the captain of her senior year.

"She runs every morning and tries to run during lunch and after work when she's not too busy," said Lance Cpl. Darrick Cundy, an MWSS-371 integrated maintenance management specialist who works for Demchko. "I don't know anyone else that's as driven as she is with running."

Demchko enjoys running for the training as well as the thrill of competition.

"I think in her mind she just sees the

championship as another challenge," said Cundy.

But she's not just an outstanding Marine athletically, said Cundy.

"She's got the kind of personality you naturally want to follow," Cundy said.

That initiative, which is present in both her athletic and professional career, is probably a direct cause for her continuous selection for Marine Corps running competitions, said Walter Sosinski, the station athletic director.

"Each time a MarAdmin would come out for a cross-country competition, her name would be on the list for Yuma," said Sosinski.

Demchko was one of three females with the Yuma team at the All-Marine Championship at Miramar.

The air station's team finished sixth out of seven at the championship with a combined time of 129.36.

Anyone interested in participating on the station cross-country team can



Photo by Lance Cpl. Austin Hazard

**2nd Lt. Erin Demchko, Marine Wing Support Squadron 371 maintenance management officer, runs around the track at the Thomas Meyer Memorial Park here Wednesday. Demchko, the first female to finish at the All-Marine Cross-Country Championship Jan. 12, was selected to compete with the All-Marine team at the Armed Forces Cross-Country Championship in Derwood, Md., Feb. 7.**

## Got what it takes to be All-Marine?

The All-Marine boxing, wrestling, and men's and women's basketball and volleyball teams are slated to hold tryouts ranging between February and June.

The All-Marine wrestling team trials will run from Feb. 11 to March 12 at Camp Lejeune, N.C. Interested Marines must submit a sports application to Headquarters Marine Corps Semper Fit no later than Feb. 8.

The boxing team tryouts will run from April 5-25 at Camp Lejeune. Applications must be submitted no later than March 26.

The men's and women's basketball team trial camps

will run from April 19 to May 9 at Camp Pendleton, Calif., and Cherry Point, N.C., respectively. Applications must be submitted no later than April 10.

The men's and women's volleyball team trials will run from May 12 to June 2 at Cherry Point. Applications must be submitted no later than May 1.

Applications can be found at [www.usmc-mccs.org/sports](http://www.usmc-mccs.org/sports).

For information required for the different applications, see Marine Administrative Messages 34/09, 35/09, 36/09, 37/09 and 38/09.